

1 REMARKS

2 Status of the Claims

3 Claims 1–18 remain pending in the application, Claims 1, 2, 10, 11, and 16 having been
4 amended. Note that Claim 2 was edited to reflect an amendment in the Office Action Response to the
5 Office Action issued April 06, 2004, but was inadvertently not marked as “Currently Amended.”
6 Thus, Claim 2 reflects the amendment previously presented, by not so indicated in the last response,
7 and accordingly, has been marked as “Currently Amended” in this Office Action response so that the
8 Examiner will be understand how the claim was amended.

9 Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

10 The Examiner has rejected Claims 1-18 as being anticipated by Microsoft Office 97,
11 Copyright 1983-1996 by Microsoft Corporation. Selected screen captures of Microsoft Office 97 are
12 presented in Microsoft Office 97 – Send to Function, captured March 30, 2004 (hereinafter referred
13 to as “the Microsoft Office 97 reference”). The Examiner asserts that the Microsoft Office 97
14 reference describes each element of applicants’ claimed invention. However, as amended, it should
15 be apparent that all claims clearly distinguish over the cited reference, for the reasons discussed
16 below.

17 In the interest of reducing the complexity of the issues for the Examiner to consider in this
18 response, the following discussion focuses on amended independent Claims 1, 10, and 16. The
19 patentability of each remaining dependent claim is not necessarily separately addressed in detail.
20 However, applicants’ decision not to discuss the differences between the cited art and each dependent
21 claim should not be considered as an admission that applicants concur with the Examiner’s
22 conclusion that these dependent claims are not patentable over the disclosure in the cited references.
23 Similarly, applicants’ decision not to discuss differences between the prior art and every claim
24 element, or every comment made by the Examiner, should not be considered as an admission that
25 applicants concur with the Examiner’s interpretation and assertions regarding those claims. Indeed,
26 applicants believe that all of the dependent claims patentably distinguish over the references cited.
27 Moreover, a specific traverse of the rejection of each dependent claim is not required, since
28 dependent claims are patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims from which
29 the dependent claims ultimately depend.
30

1 With respect to independent Claim 1, under the section of the present Office Action entitled
2 "Response to Arguments," the Examiner asserts that the features discussed by applicants in traversing
3 the previous rejection are not persuasive because they are not recited in the claims. Namely,
4 applicants pointed out that "a user can directly manipulate reminders present in the database, without
5 going through the application suite, thus it will be apparent that the user interface alternative is also
6 not another application program," "there is no teaching or suggestion of setting both the time and the
7 date in the cited reference," and "the reference neither teaches nor suggests applicant's seamless
8 method of creating a reminder to access a document from within either an application suite
9 comprising the application program or a user interface" are not recited in the rejected claims.
10 Accordingly, Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that unlike the Microsoft Office 97 reference,
11 applicants' claimed method is seamless and automated so that a user is not required to manually
12 access any other application program in order to create the timed reminder. The Examiner should
13 note that FIGURE 3 displays a reminder creation dialog 300, which provides support for this
14 amendment. Also, as previously mentioned by applicants, this dialog may be accessed from "*any of*
15 *the applications 240, 250, 260, 270 comprising the application suite 280,*" or "*from the user interface*
16 *200*" (see applicants' specification, page 13, lines 17-22).

17 In addition, Claim 1 provides the user is enabled to enter a time for displaying the reminder in
18 the dialogue that is displayed (see applicants' specification, page 16, lines 16-18). Thus, in applicants
19 claimed method, the user may selectively enter any desired time, instead of being forced to select a
20 predefined time. Accordingly, the rejection of independent Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)
21 over the Microsoft Office 97 reference should be withdrawn for these reasons.

22 With respect to the previous traverse of the rejection of independent Claim 10, under the
23 section entitled "Response to Arguments," the Examiner indicates that applicants have argued
24 "Figure 4 does not show a database of messages" but then simply refers to the rejection of Claim 10
25 as noted in the preceding portion of the Office Action. Also, the Examiner directs applicants to
26 Figure 11, which the Examiner asserts discloses the database of messages, but acknowledges that it
27 does not contain any records.

28 However, it is not apparent to applicants how either Figure 4 or Figure 11 teaches or suggests
29 the step of automatically polling a database from a first application. The Examiner restates the same
30 argument for rejecting Claim 10 as he did in the Office Action from April 6, 2004, with the exception

1 that he now asserts the polling is automatic. But, just because Figure 4 shows an open e-mail
2 message being read and a reminder being created, it is not clear to applicants how FIGURE 4
3 inherently teaches automatic polling of a database from a first application. In addition, while
4 Figure 11 appears to be a reminder, there is no teaching or suggestion in the reference that any
5 database in a first application has automatically been polled.

6 Nevertheless, applicants have amended Claim 10 to include a step generally extracted from
7 Claim 11. Claim 10 as amended now recites that applicants' method *automatically* determines
8 whether an application capable of polling the database is active. The Microsoft Office 97 reference
9 neither teaches nor discloses this step, as the Examiner admits on page 5 of the Office Action where
10 the user, not software, determines if the application capable of polling the reminder data base is
11 active. Because, if Microsoft Outlook 97 is not active, *the user activates* it as shown in FIGURE 9.

12 In contrast, in applicants' method, the document reminder system will poll the database in
13 order to determine whether any application capable of polling need to be activated. The document
14 reminder system performs these steps during idle CPU cycles or as a background computing task.
15 The polling is typically carried out via at least one application within the application suite. Thus, an
16 application comprising a portion of the suite must be active in order to poll the database for the
17 presence of any imminent reminders. In the event that no portion of the application suite is active,
18 the exemplary embodiment may launch a background program for the sole purpose of checking the
19 database at set intervals (see applicants' specification, page 12, line 21 – page 13, lines 7). Since
20 Microsoft Outlook 97 neither teaches nor discloses all the steps of applicants Claim 10, the rejection
21 of independent Claim 10 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over the Microsoft Office 97 reference should
22 be withdrawn.

23 With respect to independent Claim 16, under the section of the Office Action entitled
24 "Response to Arguments," in regard to applicants' argument that the Microsoft Office 97 reference
25 neither teaches nor suggests automatically determining whether a checking application is active or
26 automatically activating a background checking program, Examiner simply directs applicants to the
27 rejection of claim 16 as set forth in a preceding portion of the Office Action and indicates that the
28 claim is rejected for the same reasons as Claims 1, 10, and 11. However, the reasons provided by the
29 Examiner for Claim 16 restate the same argument put forth in the Office Action response of April 6,
30 2004, but do not specifically explain why applicants' traversal of that rejection is not compelling.

1 Nevertheless, applicants have amended Claim 16 to clarify that it is automatically determined
2 whether or not a checking application is active without intervention by a user. In other words, a user
3 does not have to manually determine if the checking application is active. Furthermore, applicants
4 have also clarified that the background checking program is also automatically activated without
5 intervention by the user. Again, a user does not have to manually activate the background checking
6 program. Accordingly, the rejection of Claim 16 should be withdrawn in view of the amendments
7 above, because Examiner admits on page 5 of the Office Action that the user, not software,
8 determines if an application capable of polling the reminder data base is active, and if Microsoft
9 Outlook 97 is not active, the user can activate it as shown in FIGURE 9. In contrast, applicants
10 method provides for an automatic determination that does not involve the user.

11 Because dependent claims are considered to include all of the elements of the independent
12 claims from which the dependent claims ultimately depend and because the Microsoft Office 97
13 reference does not disclose or suggest all of what is recited in independent Claims 1, 10, and 16, the
14 rejection of dependent Claims 2-9, 11-15, and 17-18, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over the Microsoft
15 Office 97 reference should be withdrawn. These dependent claims are patentable for at least the
16 same reasons noted above in the traverse of the rejection of Claims 1, 10, and 16.

17 In view of the amendments and Remarks set forth above, it will be apparent that the claims in
18 this application define a novel and non-obvious invention and are therefore patentable. Accordingly,
19 the application is in condition for allowance and should be passed to issue without further delay.
20 Should any questions remain, the Examiner is invited to telephone applicants' attorney at the number
21 listed below.

22 Respectfully submitted,

23 

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27 MAILING CERTIFICATE

28 I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service in a sealed
29 envelope as first class mail with postage thereon fully prepaid addressed to: Commissioner for Patents,
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on March 22, 2005.

30 Date: March 22, 2005

